

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

FEATURE

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UDALL CALLS FOR COOPERATIVE EFFORT TO SAVE WILDLIFE

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today called for a "cooperative effort to halt the decline of wildlife" and said Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife is taking steps to save wildlife threatened with extinction.

"The efforts to save these species include (1) preservation of critical habitat, (2) improvement of existing habitat, (3) field studies of environmental needs, (4) rearing young in captivity to bolster wild stocks, and (5) enlarging existing populations through transplants," the Secretary said.

"With cooperation from other Federal and State agencies, plus private groups and individuals, we are learning what these animals need now for their survival in the future," he said.

The 1967 official list of endangered wildlife, put together after reports from many sources, numbers 78 species. It includes well-known types such as the southern bald eagle and other more obscure animals such as the Texas blind salamander.

Director John Gottschalk of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife said his agency's program is an outgrowth of the 1966 Endangered Species Preservation Act. After this law was passed, studies began at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland on several species of birds nearing extinction. Scientists are learning how to raise young in captivity to

bolster wild flocks. In addition, the Bureau added biologists for field studies of endangered birds and mammals. Endangered fish, reptiles, and amphibians will be included in field studies as funds become available.

"Human abuse of land, water, and air, urbanization with its factories, roads and airports, and use of pesticides and other lethal chemicals are social practices affecting our living environment," Dr. Gottschalk said.

Acquisition of essential habitat for several species is a pressing need. "Dogs, poachers, and hurricanes aside, endangered Key deer cannot live in the midst of pizza parlors, and a marsh blacktopped for an airport will not sustain marsh dwellers," Dr. Gottschalk declared.

"But preservation of habitat involves more than land," he said. The environment must be protected from pollution, fire, human disturbance, loss of food and cover, reduction in stream flow, siltation, and other actions.

Many areas within the 765 million acres of public lands can be improved, and are under survey.

National wildlife refuges are home for at least 16 animals in danger of extinction. Bison and desert bighorn sheep, whose numbers were diminished greatly, have made comebacks on refuges. The trumpeter swan, once on the verge of extinction, now flourishes on Red Rock Lakes in Montana.

Sport Fisheries and Wildlife is cooperating with other Federal agencies and private landowners to solve habitat problems of endangered animals. The National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Red Lake Band of the Chippewa Tribe, the Northern States Power Company of Minneapolis, and several large forestry companies are protecting bald eagle nesting sites on millions of acres of private lands.

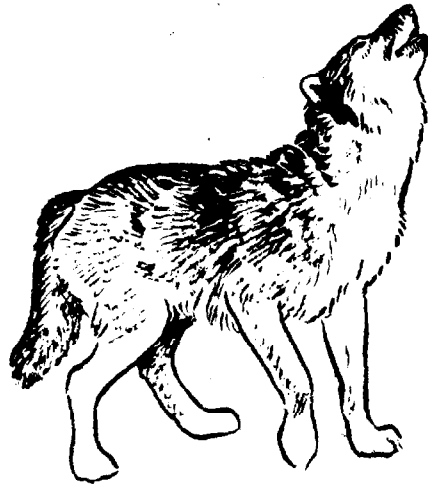
State wildlife agencies have built up several game species through live trapping and transplants of fish, pheasants, wild turkey, and deer. This technique will be tested for rare animals.

Some endangered forms could be wiped out in a single tragedy, as happened in 1916 when a fire swept across Martha's Vineyard and killed the only heath hens in the United States. To prevent this happening to other endangered species, Sport Fisheries and Wildlife will attempt to establish nucleus groups when numbers permit and other good habitats are available.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Photographs of various endangered species are available from the Office of Conservation Education, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Washington, D.C. 20240



Black-Footed
Ferret



Timber Wolf



Alligator

ENDANGERED SPECIES



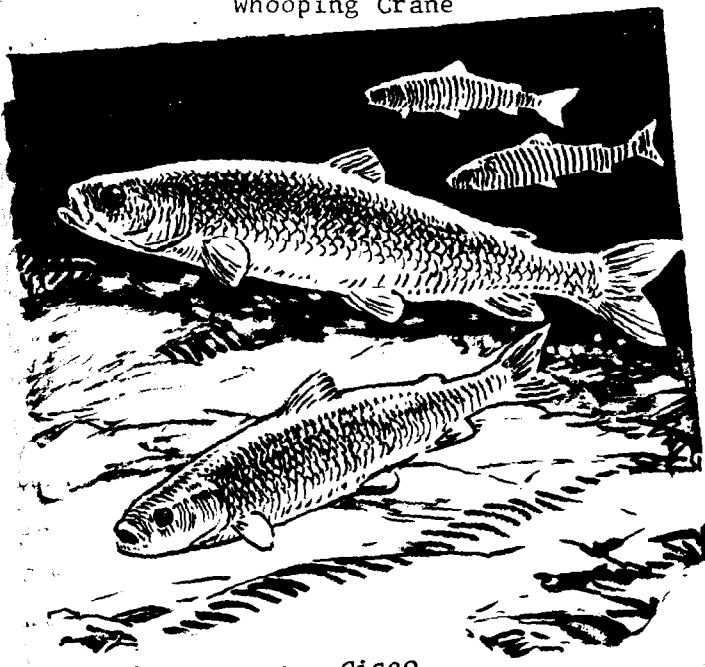
Whooping Crane



Ivory-Billed
Woodpecker



Bald Eagle



Longjaw Cisco



Black Toad